

**Reif Estate Winery****2004 Vidal Icewine
(Niagara Peninsula)**

When Inniskillin first tried to make Icewine in 1983, the Vidal grapes they planned to use belonged to the Reif Estate, the neighbouring farm on the Niagara Parkway. But winemaker Karl Kaiser went on vacation prior to harvesting and when he returned, he found that birds had devoured the entire crop. Since then all Ontario wineries net the vines that they set aside for Icewine.

Klaus Reif, who took over the winemaking from his uncle Ewald twenty years ago, is the only winemaker in Canada to have made Icewine both in Ontario and Germany. Incidentally, 1983 was the year Klaus made his first Eiswein at Geisenheim. Klaus Reif believes that Vidal is the purest Icewine grape, because Riesling left to hang into December can be attacked by botrytis. The hybrid Vidal with its thicker skin is resistant to noble rot.

The 2004 Vidal Icewine comes from the estate's oldest block of 23-year-old vines. With a sugar reading of 41° Brix at harvest, the juice was fermented for 7 months at under 15° C. The wine is golden bronze in colour with an intense honeyed peach nose exhibiting a touch of minerality. Thick and unctuous on the palate, it shows flavours of dried apricot, pineapple and English toffee. At 10 per cent alcohol, the residual sugar is 20.3 g/100ml.

Reviewed August 31, 2007 by [Tony Aspler](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Reif Estate Winery](#)

Vintage: 2004

Wine: Vidal Icewine

Appellation: [Niagara Peninsula](#)

Grape: Vidal Blanc

Price: \$46.95 (375ml)

THE REVIEWER**Tony Aspler**

Tony Aspler has been reviewing wines since 1975 and will continue doing so until he gets it right. Although his license plate is *CLARET*, he enjoys all wines except sparkling Retsina. He says he's not a wine critic but a wine evangelist because he wants to turn readers onto wine rather than turn them off. His style is telegraphic rather than poetic because there are only so many ways to say 'mellow tannins'.